

Remarks

In the Office action mailed April 6, 2005, claims 5-7 were objected to because of an antecedent basis error in claim 5. Claim 1 was rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,232,753 ("Pasotti et al."). Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 for being unpatentable over Pasotti et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 4,942,312 ("Stevens et al."). Claims 3, 8, 11, 12, 14, and 15 were rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable over Pasotti et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,462,526 ("Tanase"). Claims 9 and 10 were rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable over Pasotti et al. and Tanase in view of U.S. Pat. No. 4,400,211 ("Yokomizo et al."). Claim 13 was rejected under § 103 as being unpatentable over Pasotti et al. in view of Tanase and further in view of Stevens and U.S. Pat. No. 6,686,728 ("Nakajima"). Claim 4 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Each of these objections and rejections will be discussed below.

Objections

Claim 5 has been amended to correct the antecedent basis error. The phrase "the first and second current loads" has been amended to read "the low and high current loads." Claim 5, and dependent claims 6 and 7, are now in allowable form.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication of allowability for the subject matter of claim 4. However, Applicant declines to rewrite claim 4 into independent form at this time in view of the arguments presented below for the patentability of its base claim, independent claim 1.

§ 102(b)

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Pasotti et al. In order to anticipate a claim, a reference must teach all the elements of a claim. See Verdegaaal Bros., Inc. v. Union Oil Co., 814 F.2d 628, 631 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Unlike Applicant's claim 1, Pasotti et al. do not teach a "feedback regulation means for providing a fine level of regulation to [the] common supply voltage delivered to a low current load, the feedback regulation means having an output line connected to . . . control means of the regulation means." Application, amended claim 1. In Applicant's Fig. 1, the feedback means is coupled to the control means of the regulation means (47) by output line 35. (This control means provides a coarse level of voltage regulation to a common supply voltage delivered to a high current load.) See Application, Fig. 1, See id. amended claim 1. In contrast, Pasotti et al.'s Fig. 2 (and accompanying text) do not teach or suggest a feedback regulations means with an output line connected to a control means of a regulations means. Instead, Pasotti et al. teach an output line of feedback regulation means which is connected to the output of transistors MR . . . MRn. Since Pasotti et al. neither teach nor suggest all the elements of Applicant's claim 1, the claim is not anticipated.

§ 103(a)

In order for a claim to be obvious, a reference, alone or in combination with another reference, must teach or suggest all claim limitations. See MPEP § 2143. Applicant asserts that the cited references, alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest all the elements of Applicant's claims and therefore these claims are patentable.

Claim 2

Claim 2 was rejected under § 103(a) on grounds that "it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Pasotti et.al [sic] to include depletion type NMOS transistors in order to produce a stable output voltage as taught by Stevens." Office action, p. 4. As shown above, Pasotti et al. do not teach or suggest all the elements of claim 1 from which claim 2 depends. Stevens teaches an integrated circuit with two NMOS depletion transistors which have selected parameters such that when the transistors are connected, the circuit will produce a stable DC output voltage in response to a variable input voltage. Stevens does not teach Applicant's regulation means, including a control means, for providing a coarse level of voltage regulation to a common supply voltage delivered to a high current load, or Applicant's feedback regulation means for providing a fine level of regulation to the common supply voltage delivered to a low current load, the feedback regulation means having an output line connected to the control means of the regulation means whereby an output level of the feedback regulation means influences the regulation means. Neither Pasotti et al. nor Stevens, alone or in combination, teach or suggest all the elements of Applicant's claim 2. Therefore, this claim is not obvious.

Claim 3

Claim 3 was rejected under § 103(a), according to the Office action, on grounds that it would have been obvious to combine the teachings of Pasotti et al. with Tanase's teachings about using a bandgap regulator for supplying a reference voltage. See Office action at 4. As shown above, Pasotti et al. neither teaches nor suggests all the elements of Applicant's claim 1, from which claim 3 depends. Tanase also does not teach or suggest Applicant's regulation means (including a control means) for providing a coarse level of

voltage regulation to a common supply voltage delivered to a high current load and feedback regulation means for providing a fine level of regulation to a common supply voltage delivered to a low current load and having an output line connected to the regulation means' control means. Neither Pasotti et al. nor Tanase, alone or in combination, teach or suggest all the elements of Applicant's claim 3. Therefore, this claim is not obvious.

Claim 8

According to the Office action, claim 8 was rejected under § 103(a) due to the teachings of Pasotti et al. in view of Tanase, which teaches that bandgap regulators are used for supplying a reference voltage. Unlike Applicant's claim 8, neither Pasotti et al. nor Tanase, alone or in combination, teach a first regulator stage having a first current driver device having a first output line and a second current device driver having a control gate coupled to the first output line. Instead, Pasotti et al. teach an output line of a first transistor MR which is connected to the output, not the control gate, of transistors MR1 . . . MRn. Therefore, neither Pasotti et al. nor Tanase, alone or in combination, teach or suggest all the limitations of Applicant's claim 8 and the claim is not obvious.

Claims 11, 12, 14, and 15

Claims 11, 12, 14, and 15 were rejected in the Office action under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pasotti et al. in view of Tanase. These claims are dependent claims of independent claim 8. As shown above, claim 8 is not obvious since neither Pasotti et al. nor Tanase, alone or in combination, teach or suggest all the limitations of Applicant's claim 8. Therefore, dependent claims 11, 12, 14, and 15 are also not obvious for at least the same reasons as claim 8.

Claims 9 and 10

Claims 9 and 10 were rejected in the Office action under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pasotti et al. and Tanase in view of Yokomizo et al. Claims 9 and 10 are dependent claims of independent claim 8. As shown above, claim 8 is not obvious since neither Pasotti et al. nor Tanase, alone or in combination, teach or suggest all the limitations of Applicant's claim 8. Therefore, dependent claims 9 and 10 are also not obvious for at least the same reasons as claim 8.

Claim 13

Claim 13 was rejected in the Office action under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pasotti et al. in view of Tanase and further in view of Stevens and U.S. Pat. No. 6,686,728 to Nakajima. Claim 13 is a dependent claim of independent claim 8. As shown above, claim 8 is not obvious since neither Pasotti et al. nor Tanase, alone or in combination, teach or suggest all the limitations of Applicant's claim 8. Therefore, dependent claim 13 is also not obvious for at least the same reasons as claim 8.



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Conclusion

Applicant has amended claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, and 13 as well as the specification. Applicant has also shown that claim 1 is not anticipated and claims 2, 3, and 8-15 are not obvious. Applicant has also responded to the objections to claims 5-7. A Notice of Allowance is requested.

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this paper (along with any paper referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date shown below with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

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